

11-13 Meeting Minutes:

Meeting Information

- Date & Time: 2024-11-13 16:33:27
- Location: Community Room, Auburn Hall 60 Court Street Auburn
- Attendees: Chris Carson, David Bell, David Griswold, Joe Gray, Barbara Mitchell, David Trask, and John Cleveland Absent: Philip Savignano, Amy Dieterich, Planning Staff: John Blais and Natalie Thomsen Member of the Public Steve Beale.

Meeting Minutes

1. Minute Approval, Land Use Planning and GIS Mapping

- **Attendance and Approval of Minutes**
The meeting began with attendance and the approval of the previous meeting's minutes, which were accepted by the group.
- **GIS Mapping Presentation**
Natalie Thomsen presented a GIS map showing various layers such as prime agricultural soils, zoning districts, and the Lake Auburn watershed, which can be used by landowners for planning.
- **Zoning and Ordinance Discussion**
Discussion on zoning districts, ordinance implications for prime soils, and the prohibition of housing in certain areas like the Lake Auburn watershed.
- **State Historic and Tree Growth Data**
Discussion on the availability of state historic data and the potential to include tree growth data in the GIS mapping.
- **Endangered Species and Environmental Concerns**
Discussion on the identification of endangered species and the need for environmental assessments for development projects.

Conclusion

1. Minutes were approved.

2. Land Use Planning and Environmental Compliance

- **Checklist and Ordinance Review**
The meeting focused on reviewing checklists and ordinances related to land use, particularly in agricultural and natural resource areas. Discussions included refining the checklist, referencing specific chapters and sections, and ensuring

clarity by avoiding acronyms. The importance of avoiding wetlands and prime soils was emphasized, with a focus on understanding what 'avoid' means in practice.

- **State Regulations and Environmental Considerations**

The discussion covered the impact of state regulations on land use, especially concerning wetlands, essential habitats, and deer wintering areas. The need for biological monitoring and environmental assessments was highlighted, with a focus on how these regulations affect farming and residential development.

- **Farming and Residential Development**

The conversation addressed the challenges of developing residential areas on farmland, particularly in special habitats. The need for a clear plan that considers both farming and residential needs was discussed, with an emphasis on understanding the principal use of the land.

Conclusion

1. The group agreed to clarify the language in the checklist, particularly around the term 'avoid' and its implications.
2. The group decided to defer to state regulations for guidance and to ensure compliance with most environmental considerations.
3. It was concluded that each situation is unique and requires careful consideration of state regulations and environmental impacts.

3. Regulatory Compliance and Land Use Planning

- **Slope Restrictions for Housing**

The discussion focused on the language used in regulations regarding housing on slopes greater than 25%. There was debate over whether 'shall' or 'avoid' implies a strict prohibition or a guideline.

- **Comprehensive Oversight Plan**

The need for a comprehensive oversight plan for site development was discussed, emphasizing the importance of meeting all regulatory requirements before approving housing.

- **Agricultural and Recreational Land Use**

The conversation covered the integration of agricultural and recreational uses on land, including the potential for attracting growers and the implications of recreational facilities.

- **Outdoor vs. Indoor Recreational Facilities**

The discussion addressed the definitions and allowances for outdoor versus indoor recreational facilities in AG/RP zones. The ordinance speaks to outdoor recreation in the AGRP zone and indoor recreation in commercial zones

- **Accessory Use and Housing**

The meeting explored the conditions under which housing can be considered an accessory use to a primary farming or recreational activity.

Conclusion

1. The consensus was that 'shall' indicates a definite restriction, whereas 'avoid' suggests a guideline.
2. Agreement was reached on the necessity of a comprehensive site plan that includes all site aspects.
3. There was a positive outlook on integrating agricultural and recreational uses to attract more interest in the area.

4. Land Use Planning and Regulations

- **Farm Management and Building Permits**
Discussion on the regulations and requirements for rebuilding homes near gravel pits, including the timeline for obtaining building permits and the role of zoning laws.
- **Checklist for Site Planning**
The group discussed the importance of a checklist for site planning to ensure consistency in staff judgments. The checklist is intended to help determine the usability of land for various purposes, including recreational and agricultural uses.
- **Agricultural and Recreational Use Regulations**
The conversation covered the requirements for agricultural and recreational land use, including the need for infrastructure planning and the absence of ordinances for farm plans. The discussion also touched on the feasibility of starting a farm and the process for building a house.
- **Zoning and Land Use Queries**
The meeting addressed frequent inquiries about changing zoning for agricultural land to allow for residential building. The process and challenges of explaining zoning regulations to potential buyers were discussed.
- **Updating and Publishing Documents**
The team agreed on the importance of updating and publishing documents related to zoning and land use. Suggestions were made to include dates in file names for easier tracking of the latest versions.
- **Agricultural Ordinance Revisions**
The group reviewed the history and ongoing efforts to refine the agricultural checklist, emphasizing the need for clear operating criteria following the removal of income limits.

Next Arrangements

- [] Return to natural resource discussions next week.
- [] Continue updating and publishing checklist documents online.
- [] Next Meeting is Thursday, November 21st at 5:30 in the Community Room