

**City of Ramsey**  
**Agenda**  
**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**  
**Monday November 7, 2011**  
**6:30 pm**  
**Mississippi River Room, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizen Input**
3. **Approve Agenda**
4. **Approve Minutes**
  1. Approve Meeting Minutes Dated October 3, 2011
5. **Policy Board Business**
  1. Consider Ways to Enhance 'Green' Information on the City's Website
  2. Review of Vegetation Management within Transmission Line Corridors
6. **Board/Staff Input**
  - Expo Subcommittee Update
  - VA Grand Opening and Ramsey Rail Station Kickoff Events
7. **Adjournment**

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**4. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 11/07/2011

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Title:**

Approve Meeting Minutes Dated October 3, 2011

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**Attachments**

Meeting Minutes Dated October 3, 2011

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**Form Review**

<b>Inbox</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chris Anderson (Originator)	Chris Anderson	11/03/2011 02:45 PM
Form Started By: Chris Anderson		Started On: 11/03/2011 02:24 PM
	Final Approval Date: 11/03/2011	

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, October 3, 2011, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Mississippi River Conference Room at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Michael Max  
                            Board Member Bob Bentz  
                            Board Member Jennifer Carlson  
                            Board Member John Enstrom

Members Absent:     Board Member Thomas Stodola

Also Present:         Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Max called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Board Member Carlson and seconded by Board Member Bentz to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Bentz, and Carlson. Stodola. Voting No: None. Abstain: Board Member Enstrom. Absent: Board Member Stodola.

**APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD MINUTES**

Motion by Board Member Bentz and seconded by Board Member Carlson to approve the joint Planning Commission/EPB meeting minutes dated September 8, 2011 and the regular meeting minutes dated September 8, 2011.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Bentz and Carlson. Voting No: None. Abstain: Board Member Enstrom. Absent: Board Member Carlson.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator inquired why Board Member Enstrom abstained from both votes.

Board Member Enstrom stated that he continues to get an error message and doesn't want to get a virus from the City's website.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson asked if the message he was getting was about a trusted site and whether to allow access to it or not. If so, that does not indicate a threat in terms of a virus.

## **POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

### **Case #1: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report and indicated that he received an email from Board Member Stodola expressing an interest in the vice chair position.

Motion by Board Member Carlson and seconded by Board Member Bentz to appoint Tom Stodola as Vice Chairperson through June, 2012.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Enstrom, Bentz, and Carlson. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Stodola.

Motion by Board Member Bentz and seconded by Board Member Carlson to appoint Michael Max as Chairperson through June, 2012.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Enstrom, Bentz, and Carlson. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Stodola.

### **Case #2: Review Discussion of Joint EPB/Planning Commission Meeting**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Enstrom stated that he appreciated the opportunity to work with another advisory board and thought that members of the Planning Commission welcomed the EPB and there was good discussion.

Board Member Bentz asked whether Federal regulations dictated parking standards similar to how the ADA act requires a certain number of handicap accessible parking stalls.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that minimum required parking stalls are addressed through local zoning standards.

Discussion ensued regarding the joint meeting and some of the ideas that were considered.

### **Case #3: Consider Date for 2012 Environmental Expo Event**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued about whether the tree sale should continue to be a component of the event and there was unanimous support for continuing the tree sale.

Board Member Enstrom stated his opinion was that since this event is typically right around Arbor Day, it wouldn't make sense to not offer a tree sale.

Chairperson Max agreed and thought that it also helped attract some people to the event.

Board Member Bentz stated he still thought that there should be some sort of option for people to buy trees and donate them to a park of their choosing.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that with the tree sale continuing to be a part of the event, the potential dates would be limited to around the end of April or beginning of May.

Motion by Board Member Carlson and seconded by Board Member Enstrom to include a tree sale with the expo event and to hold the 2012 Environmental Expo & Tree Sale event on Saturday, April 28, 2012.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Enstrom, Bentz, and Carlson. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Stodola.

## **BOARD/STAFF INPUT**

Board Member Enstrom provided the Board with a brief update from the last WMO meeting.

Board Member Enstrom stated that he was very disappointed with all the trees being removed by GRE along a transmission line in the northern part of the city. He asked if the Board was willing to take action to stop this work.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson reminded the Board that there is a City Council approved work plan in place and that this topic is not identified in it. Prior to working on something not identified on the approved work plan would require direction from City Council.

Discussion ensued about the tree removal and a distinction was made that the tree removal is legal and within the rights of the easement holder (GRE) however, that does not necessarily mean that the tree removals aren't excessive.

Consensus of the Board was that if there were City Council direction to explore alternative options, they would certainly do so.

Board Member Enstrom stated that he was likely going to attend the next City Council meeting and during citizen input, raise this issue to City Council.

Board Member Bentz asked if there may be an interest in considering recommendations for planting certain species near drain fields and recommendations for certain species based on lot size.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he thought it may make sense for a recommendation to not plant any tree(s) within a certain distance of a drain field, regardless of species, to avoid potential conflicts between roots and the system.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator discouraged identifying certain species for certain lot sizes. If there was something that could be done to limit potential impacts to adjacent properties, maybe a recommendation that trees be planted a certain distance from a property line, which would help limit potential future conflicts as trees grow in size.

Board Member Bentz stated that one time last month he and his family were at central park in the afternoon and the irrigation system was on and he questioned why it would be running in the middle of the day.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he did not know why it was on but was sure that there must have been a logical reason for it. He stated he would follow up with the Parks Division regarding this.

Board Member Bentz suggested creating a seasonal check list for irrigation system owners that could be included in a newsletter or on the website.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Board Member Enstrom and seconded by Board Member Carlson to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**5. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 11/07/2011

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community Development

**Title:**

Consider Ways to Enhance 'Green' Information on the City's Website

**Background:**

One of the action items on the Board's 2011-2012 Council approved work plan was to enhance 'green' information on the City's website. There are some limitations with the existing website that prohibit adding additional items to the home page; however, these limitations will be addressed in the near future providing more flexibility for the website and web pages. In an attempt to call more attention to 'green' topics, resources, etc, Staff would like to add to the home page a 'Ramsey Green Pages' link. This could serve as the portal for information related to forestry, invasive species, water, etc as well as include links to various sections of City Code such as the Critical River and Wild and Scenic Rivers Overlay Districts, Tree Preservation and Floodplain ordinances among others. Additionally, this could also be the home for resources such as the Ramsey Tree Book, the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), Wetland Inventory, water conservation tool box and others.

**Recommendation:**

Staff is interested in hearing from the Board their ideas related to making 'green' information more readily visible on the website, including both specific ideas and/or generalized concepts. This may also be a good time to also brainstorm what other types of 'green' information could be created and added to the site.

**EPB Action:**

Based on discussion.

**Form Review**

<b>Inbox</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chris Anderson (Originator)	Chris Anderson	11/04/2011 03:01 PM
Form Started By: Chris Anderson		Started On: 11/04/2011 12:42 PM
	Final Approval Date: 11/04/2011	

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**5. 2.**

**Meeting Date:** 11/07/2011

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Title:**

Review of Vegetation Management within Transmission Line Corridors

**Background:**

At the October Board meeting, a concern was raised regarding vegetation management strategies being employed along one of the transmission lines in the northern part of the city. This concern was brought to the Council's attention through citizen input at the October 11 City Council meeting. Subsequently, City Staff compiled and sent a letter service providers requesting that tree removal be minimized as much as possible (understanding their need and right to maintain their rights-of-way. Additionally, City Staff has drafted a resolution for Council consideration related to vegetation management within utility easements. City Council did not provide any specific direction or action for the EPB regarding this matter.

**EPB Action:**

No action required. For informational purposes only.

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**Attachments**

**Proposed Utility Easements Resolution**

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**Form Review**

<b>Inbox</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chris Anderson (Originator)	Chris Anderson	11/04/2011 03:02 PM
Form Started By: Chris Anderson		Started On: 11/01/2011 02:12 PM
	Final Approval Date: 11/04/2011	

Councilmember introduced the following resolution and moved for its adoption:

**RESOLUTION #11-11-XXX**

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING CERTAIN PRACTICES OF ALL UTILITIES DOING BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF RAMSEY**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Ramsey considers utilities to be an important and essential service to the community; and;

**WHEREAS**, utilities have an obligation to manage rights-of-way and easements, including removing trees, for safety and operational reasons to ensure continued reliable service; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has entered into franchise agreements with each utility company to allow the company to utilize the City's rights-of-way to provide service to its residents and to support the regional system; and

**WHEREAS**, utilities make use of both public and private easements throughout the community; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has an interest in protecting the health, safety, welfare, and the value of property for its residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the City also has an interest in protecting the natural environment for the benefit of all; and

**WHEREAS**, the City works to protect its natural environment and has been designated a *Tree City USA* for the past 19 years; and

**WHEREAS**, residents and Ramsey officials have expressed concern over current practices in regard to the management of the rights-of-way and easements.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAMSEY, ANOKA COUNTY, STATE OF MINNESOTA, as follows:**

- 1) That the City of Ramsey does hereby state and request of all utilities doing business in the City of Ramsey that:
  - a) tree trimming and removal be minimized as much as possible in order to preserve this valuable resource for the community; and
  - b) proper survey verifications be done, to ensure that tree trimming and removal by contractors is not occurring outside of the utility easement and/or right-of-way; and
  - c) notification and written permission be received from all property owners prior to the application of any pesticide or herbicide; and

- d) personal property damage be minimized; and
- e) fully disclose all potential public health and safety issues associated with any transmission line construction or right-of-way/easement clearance activity; and
- f) restore all habitat within the right-of-way/easement with native species plantings, and remove all debris as requested by the property owner; and
- g) seek City approval for any major clearance project.

The motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilmember \_\_\_\_\_, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

and the following abstained:

and the following were absent:

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted by the Ramsey City Council this the \_\_\_\_ day of November 2011.

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Mayor Bob Ramsey

**ATTEST:**

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City Clerk Jo Ann M. Thieling