

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

On Monday, November 7, 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 Thomas Stodola
 Board Member John Enstrom

Members Absent: Board Member Jennifer Carlson

Also Present: Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Max called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD MINUTES

Motion by Board Member Enstrom and seconded by Board Member Bentz to approve the regular meeting minutes dated October 3, 2011.

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

Board Member Stodola stated that he abstained simply because he was not at the October meeting.

POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

Case #1: Consider Ways to Enhance 'Green' Information on the City's Website

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Max stated that he thought the recycling information could be expanded to promote/educate opportunities for reusing and/or exchanging materials rather than disposal.

Board Member Stodola inquired if the Board was aware of the website www.twincitiesfreemarket.org, which was a great place to both find items and get rid of items at no cost.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that unfortunately, Anoka County opted not to contribute funding for the site in 2011 and therefore, cannot list items on the site.

Board Member Stodola stated that Anoka County residents cannot list items to get rid of but that they can still search the site to find items.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson inquired if enhancements could simply include links to existing sites.

Chairperson Max stated that that would be fine, no reason to recreate things if information is already out there.

Board Member Bentz stated that he thought that there was a lot of redundancy on the home page and thought that things could be boiled down under essentially two headings, city administration and things to do in Ramsey.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the action item on the approved work plan was to enhance green information on the website and so the Board should focus specifically on how that can be accomplished. If there were suggestions for the website as a whole, those could be directed to the webmaster.

Board Member Bentz stated that the search function doesn't work very well. Improving search capabilities would help improve the usefulness of the website.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that that is partly his fault. As web pages are created, keywords can be added to help locate information when a search is done. That was something that he didn't initially realize when creating some of the pages but the good news is that it is something that could be addressed relatively easily. Once the conversion is made to the new program, he will go into the system and add a number of additional keywords for some of the pages.

Chairperson Max stated that years ago, through the Horse Care Board, a 'nitrogen network' was developed in which the exchange of manure was possible from horse owners to gardeners. He

thought that some sort of exchange or forum opportunity may be a good enhancement for various materials.

Board Member Bentz inquired if there are any requirements for property owners to keep street grates clear.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that as far as he knows, there are not any requirements of property owners specifically to keep cache basins clear.

Chairperson Max stated that the City encourages property owners to keep fire hydrants clear of snow during the winter months for their own benefit, maybe this same sort of encouragement could be applied to cache basins.

Further general discussion ensued about website improvement.

Case #2: Review of Vegetation Management within Transmission Line Corridors

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Enstrom stated that one of his concerns was that forty (40) years ago, the utility companies reseeded their easements with reed canary grass and that's how it was introduced to Ramsey.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that that was one of the items the resolution addressed, restoring areas with appropriate species.

Board Member Enstrom stated that he also believed that a utility company should be required to complete a survey to identify the boundary of the easement area rather than just eyeballing it.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that there was no specific direction from City Council to the Board for further review of this matter.

Chairperson Max reminded the Board that this case was just for informational purposes and thanked Board Member Enstrom for calling attention to this issue initially.

Board Member Enstrom suggested that members of the Board go online and search transmission lines and radiation to see all the information out there on this topic.

BOARD/STAFF INPUT

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson informed the Board of the grand opening event for the VA Outpatient Clinic on November 11, 2011 as well as the rail station kick-off event scheduled for November 16.

Chairperson Max stated that Board Member Bentz had a good idea for the expo event that involved some sort of presentation or workshop on nature photography.

Chairperson Max thanked Board Member Stodola for volunteering to fill the Vice Chair position.

Board Member Enstrom stated that his park will be open on Veterans Day and invited everyone to stop by. Also, he tried contacting the Home Depot about participating in the expo event but the store manager wasn't available, he'll try again another time

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator