

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

On Monday, January 9, 2012, 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 (arrived at 6:34 p.m.)  
                          Board Member Thomas Stodola  
                          Board Member John Enstrom

Members Absent:     None.

Also Present:         Councilmember Backous  
                          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 Enstrom to approve the agenda as submitted.

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

**APPROVAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD MINUTES**

Motion by Board Member Stodola and seconded by Board Member Enstrom to approve the regular meeting minutes dated December 5, 2011.

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

## **POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

### **Case #1: Green Building/LID Practices and ROI**

Board Member Bentz arrived.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Bentz asked how other communities determined the points associated with the various criteria. He stated that he was curious, for instance, why Duluth only assigned 0.75 points for redevelopment of a brownfield site.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he does not know how Duluth or other communities assigned values to the various criteria. The checklist was included only as a reference and background for the discussion. It was not intended as a document to simply be replicated.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that communities may identify those criteria that they value most, possibly in unison with those that have been specifically identified in their comp plan, for instance, to create their checklist(s).

Board Member Enstrom stated that this is all good in theory but how would any of it be enforced if it's all just encouraged. He stated as an example the Tech School in Anoka did not incorporate any of these types of practices into their recent improvement project, and did not even get the required permits for their work, and nothing was done about it.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he didn't believe the Council's goals are to establish more regulations but rather to educate, promote and encourage some potential alternative building practices that could help reduce costs for a project while also prompting more sustainable development. So, from that perspective, enforcement would be difficult, there wouldn't necessarily be anything to enforce unless a project did incorporate certain practices into their project and those were referenced in the Development Contract.

Board Member Bentz asked how LEED values were assigned.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated again that he wasn't sure how those values were determined. He did state that certain LEED practices were incorporated into some recent projects such as the Allina Clinic and that the VA Clinic, since it was a federal project, will be a LEED certified building.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he's hoping to be able to speak with a LEED certified professional, possibly through the contract with Landform, to ask some of these questions as well as questions on ROI.

Board Member Bentz stated that there may be a LEED forum that some questions could be submitted to as well.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator stated that it sounds like what would be most beneficial for the Board to continue discussing a possible points system of some sort would be for him to touch base some of these communities like Maple Grove and Duluth that have created their own systems and see how those values were determined.

The Board concurred.

Councilmember Backous stated that before too much more work is done on this topic, it may be beneficial to get feedback from the City Council for their thoughts on exploring a points-based system.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he believes that this is in line with the Board's approved work plan, as it ties in to green building practices, but that he'd try and get this topic added to a future work session agenda.

## **Case #2      2012 Environmental Expo Event**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Max stated that he contacted Anoka Ramsey Farm and Garden and that they'd be willing to have a booth at the event related to raising chickens.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that that would be good but he'd want to provide some information about city regulations to them to be included in their exhibit to make sure that residents are aware that chickens aren't allowed on lots less than three (3) acres.

Chairperson Max asked when the order forms for the tree sale would be available.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that it would be included in the next issue of the Ramsey Resident newsletter and that once he's selected the various species that will be available he can build the price list and add it to the website. That could possibly be done over the next couple weeks.

General discussion ensued about speakers for the event.

Councilmember Backous suggested that it may be worthwhile to contact the Game Fair for potential speakers. He also stated that he knows somebody that works at Channel 5 and while he didn't know if it would be possible, he'd check on the possibility of having one of their weather personalities speak.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator reviewed two options for incorporating a hands on activity, utilizing the AR room for that type of activity as well as some sort of kids presentation and not having any exhibitors in there or using a tent outside for the activities. He stated that he believes the pros of having it in the AR room are that there is no additional cost, it's indoors and so weather is not an issue, and there's access to electricity if necessary. The one main con is that it eliminates a lot of exhibitor space.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator stated that he believes the main pro for using a tent is that it provides additional space for the event. However, he believes the cons, which would be added cost for tent rental and then getting those folks that partake in the hands on activity inside to check out all the other exhibits, probably outweigh the benefit of additional space.

Chairperson Max asked if there wasn't another conference room smaller than the AR room but larger than the Mississippi Room that could be used.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that there is the Lake Itasca Room but that was in the middle of the corridor and may sort of get lost amongst the exhibitor booths.

General discussion ensued about location for hands on activity and consensus was that having it inside was preferable and look at using the Lake Itasca Room for it and just develop signage or other attention getting visuals to direct people into the room.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson suggested that the Board start putting some thought into their booth.

Board Member Stodola suggested maybe a flip book type of display that would be more hands on and interactive with attendees. The display could include invasive species for instance.

Councilmember Backous stated that the booth could also include recycling factoids and basic info on geothermal energy.

Chairperson Max stated that if a points system were to be developed as discussed in Case 1, it may be neat to have the attendees vote on what they would like developments/projects to emphasize in terms of developing a checklist and assigning values.

Board Member Stodola stated that at the holiday party he met someone that happened to be a manager at Lowe's and that he would check with him about possibly getting some kits for the hands on activity.

## **BOARD/STAFF INPUT**

Board Member Enstrom asked where things stood with filling the three (3) vacant seats on the Board.

Chairperson Max stated that he spoke with Councilmember Backous about the need to get the seats filled because with only four (4) sitting members, there's not as much 'good' discussion as there would be with a full complement of members which could also impact the quality of decisions made.

Board Member Enstrom stated that it also puts more pressure on the four (4) current members regarding decisions and discussion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator