

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

On Monday, November 5, 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
 Board Member Michael Hiatt (arrived at 6:36 p.m.)
 Board Member Larry Lewis
 Board Member Thomas Stodola
 Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent: Board Member John Enstrom

Also Present: Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated September 10, 2012

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Stodola to approve the regular meeting minutes dated September 10, 2012.

Further discussion: Board Member Lewis referenced page five, it should state, "...~~house cleaning~~ housekeeping..."

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

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Update on Environmental Expo Event

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Hiatt arrived at 6:36 p.m.

Chairperson Max stated that his impression was to continue with the Tree Sale as a standalone event and simply continue to discuss details. He noted that fall is not a bad time to plant trees, if a small booth was setup at Happy Days and pickup could occur the following weekend.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that the recycling event would be a good mix with the tree sale but advised that space is already limited for that event.

Chairperson Max stated that pickup could occur at a site further down the road.

Board Member Valentine questioned why the event would be held in the fall and not the spring.

Chairperson Max stated that trees are cheaper in the fall. He stated that spring would obviously be a better time but explained that the discussion is simply of options.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised of another option to use a gravel bed system for bare root trees, which would provide the ability to purchase trees in the spring and sell them in the fall. After discussion he agreed that option would be a better fit for the City's tree planting program but most likely not for the tree sale event.

Board Member Lewis questioned if the tree sale would be strong enough to stand alone as its own event.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the tree sale could occur in conjunction with Arbor Day to bring the focus back to trees and planting trees.

Board Member Lewis stated that he did not feel that the tree sale would be strong enough to run on its own, without some other event.

Board Member Hiatt agreed that it could be beneficial to tie in with another event and noted of the Ramsey garden club plant sale, which takes place in the parking ramp.

Chairperson Max noted that the plant sale is very successful each year and commented on the tree sales of the past. He agreed that the conjunction of trees and garden plants could be successful.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson provided background information on the past trees sales that took place at the elementary school, highlighting differences between the tree sales of now and the tree sales of the past. He stated that he didn't think that timing would

work to combine a tree sale and perennial sale because it would be too late for bare root trees and too early for perennials. He also questioned if the Board would like stock to be on site.

Chairperson Max provided insight on the process and noted that vendors prefer not to bring a large amount of stock on site.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson agreed that most municipalities now purchase a stock of trees for sale to the public, with remaining trees to be used by public works, rather than having vendors load up the trees and bringing the trees back and forth to the sale site.

Board Member Lewis questioned the ideal date for a tree sale.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson believed that the last Saturday in April would be ideal, or the first weekend in May if the event could be held in conjunction with the recycling event.

Board Member Valentine commented that if an internet sale is going to be held, with only pickup to occur at City site, the tree sale would not have to piggyback off another event.

Board Member Hiatt suggested that a marketing campaign be used to spark interest in the tree sale, such as direct mailings to residents.

Chairperson Max questioned what drove the pre-orders for the tree sale in the past.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that the City newsletter did but due to space constraints, referred readers to the website for additional information.

Board Member Bentz questioned if a Ramsey Day could take place at Green Valley, since they are the only vendor. He explained that would eliminate the need for space and would also eliminate the hauling of trees back and forth.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that his only concern is with the time of the year, noting that spring is the busiest time for the vendor and was unsure that they would want to commit to that during that time. He stated that the previous year, Green Valley declined participation in the event. He recommended that the City continue to use the supplier from the previous year. He confirmed that the DNR seedlings are no longer available. He commented on some of the details of the tree sale regarding the supplier including the varieties of trees that could be available for the sale. He advised that he would bring additional details regarding tree species to the December meeting.

Board Member Lewis suggested using an incentive for early orders, such as if you order prior to March 31st, you would get an item free or discount price. He also suggested using pictures of the tree species to make it easier for people to order.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that there were links to each species of tree for people to see pictures.

Board Member Lewis questioned if there is a budget for marketing.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson explained that in the past the event was a line item under the Environmental Expo. He stated that there would be some funds for marketing but did not think there were sufficient funds for a standalone postcard. He noted that he could mention the sale in the newsletter and possibly on a utility billing.

Board Member Lewis suggested placing flyers at local businesses, as that would not be an expensive option, and could bring in additional business.

Board Member Bentz stated that it would be nice if a business bought seedlings that could be given out to children.

Board Member Lewis stated that he is willing to help out with anything necessary and would like to be more involved than he currently is. He confirmed that other Board Members are willing to assist staff as well.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that it is not his role to assign tasks to people as he is the staff liaison but noted that it would be great if Board Members would like to volunteer to handle some tasks.

Chairperson Max noted that in the past Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson had less planning duties and more time to focus on the Environmental Expo and the tree sale, but now has much less time to do those things. He acknowledged that if the tasks were simply identified, the Board Members would love to step up and assist in any way possible.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that perhaps the Board could focus more on marketing ideas and that type of thing for the tree sale.

Chairperson Max confirmed that the Board could handle those tasks.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he believes the new schedule of events will be better, as the Board can focus on the tree sale in the spring and the Expo in the fall. He agreed that the Board could develop Committees to assist in these tasks.

Board Member Lewis confirmed open meetings laws, noting that a Committee could be composed of no more than three members.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that no more than three members could attend and explained that if four members were there the meeting would need to be noticed and a staff person would need to be present. He noted that funds would most likely not be available for those options. He stated that a Subcommittee could form to discuss those items, but did not want anyone to feel burdened into participating.

Board Member Valentine stated that it would be extremely helpful for Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson to develop a list of tasks that the Board could handle or assist with.

The Board Members brainstormed to develop a list of tasks focused on the tree sale including vendor selection, marketing efforts, development of the pre-order voucher system to be used for tree pickup, weather options, and discussions with local businesses for cross marketing or sponsorship opportunities.

It was the consensus of the Environmental Policy Board to hold the tree sale on the last Saturday in April, or first weekend in May; to use a voucher system for the tree sale, with pickup to occur at a preselected site; and utilization of Bailey's as the vendor.

The Tree Sale Subcommittee will meet the following Monday evening at 6:30 p.m. at Caribou Coffee.

5.02: Rain Garden Demonstration Project

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report. He displayed an aerial photograph of the Alpine Park site that he felt could accommodate a rain garden project, highlighting the features that would assist in the process. He stated that he has spoken with the Parks Supervisor, who also believes this would be an ideal site, because of the existing conditions and the high amount of traffic the park receives. He noted that there are some Siberian Elms popping up in the swale that would need to be removed, cleaning out the culverts, and removing sediment build-up at the curb cuts to assist in the water drainage. He stated that because of the existing elements, the project could focus more on species enhancement and educational aspects. He displayed an existing sign kiosk that is located at Alpine Park and noted that the project signage could tie in with the existing sign design, noting specific locations signs could be installed if desired. He summarized the project components discussed. He confirmed that there is not a budget for this project but noted elements that he may be able to work with.

Chairperson Max questioned the ideal time of year to conduct this activity.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that spring would be the best time for this activity. He recommended this site for the project.

Chairperson Max suggested tying this event to the tree sale, noting that volunteers could be gathered from the tree sale for this rain garden project.

Board Member Lewis believed that the rain garden project would be a good tie in with the Ramsey Garden Club.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that he would develop the species composition for the rain garden with likely assistance from the Conservation District. He noted that he could also explore the potential of students assisting with sign design as was done for Sunfish Park. He confirmed that most of the labor could be completed by volunteers and there would be a nominal cost for materials.

Board Member Stodola commented that this may be a good opportunity to partner with a local business for sponsorship or assistance.

It was the consensus of the Environmental Policy Board to conduct the rain garden demonstration project at Alpine Park in spring of 2013.

Board Member Lewis commented that it would be nice to continue this program on an annual basis, with a new site selected each year.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson provided an update on North Commons Park and the progress on that project.

5.03: Review 2012-2013 Work Plan

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report. He confirmed that demonstration projects had been identified as priority but asked for guidance from the Board.

Chairperson Max commented that he believes that the Board is doing a great job with community awareness and noted three EPB articles, which were included in the City newsletter. He questioned if the archived articles could be linked to the City website.

Board Member Lewis asked that the Eco Challenge item be moved to a higher priority.

Board Member Bentz provided insight on programs at local schools and partnerships opportunities.

Board Member Lewis noted that the Eco Challenge program could be tweaked to fit with all age groups, and those local groups.

It was the consensus of the Environmental Policy Board to amend the Work Plan as discussed.

Board Member Lewis suggested that one item from the Work Plan is included on each agenda moving forward to bring the Board up to speed on each item.

Chairperson Max commented on the large amount of work upcoming with the planning of the events and noted that some of the items on the Work Plan involve a large amount of work that cannot be completed at this time.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson clarified some of the items on the Work Plan.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **December Meeting Date**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that he has a conflict with the date of December 3rd and asked to reschedule.

It was the consensus of the Environmental Policy Board to reschedule the December meeting to the following Monday, December 10th.

- **Update on Logo/Icon**

Board Member Lewis presented the draft logo/icons that his friend developed for the Board.

The Board provided positive feedback and thanked Board Member Lewis and his friend for their work on this item.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that the file could be sent electronically.

- **Reminder: Rail Station Ribbon Cutting November 8 (1:00 p.m., train ride at 2:00 p.m.)**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson reminded the Board Members of the Rail Station Ribbon Cutting, which will take place on Thursday, November 8th. He advised that all Board Members are invited to attend the inaugural ride.

- **Reminder: Boards/Commissions and Employee Appreciation Event (January 4, 2013)**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson reminded the Board Members of the annual Appreciation Event which will be held on January 4, 2013.

Board Member Bentz questioned if thought had been given to a speaker for the next Expo.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that is another item that assistance from the Board would be appreciated.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Lewis to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*