

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

On Monday, February 4, 2013, 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 John Enstrom
 Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Larry Lewis
 Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent: Board Member Thomas Stodola

Also Present: Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to approve the agenda as submitted.

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated January 7, 2013

Chairperson Max commented on another great set of minutes from the previous Board meeting.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Lewis to approve the regular meeting minutes dated January 7, 2013.

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

Board Member Enstrom stated that he did not receive the cases or the minutes, only the agenda.

Several Board Members stated that they received everything with no issue.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he didn't know why Board Member Enstrom wouldn't have received the cases and minutes along with the agenda. The same attachment that includes the agenda, cases and minutes is sent out to the Board via one group email, so if the other members received it, he had no answer as to why Board Member Enstrom didn't receive it.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: 2013 Environmental Expo

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Max questioned the best time to have the speaker.

Board Member Lewis suggested having the speaker prior to the parade, as many people leave the Happy Days event after the parade. He questioned the accommodations that the Board would have.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson reported that the Board would have a tent and provided an estimate of the dimensions. He suggested that the Board think about whether they would like sides on the tent or just the covering over the top with open sides. He provided additional information on the setup of the Happy Days event the previous year.

Board Member Lewis suggested having a speaker with a broad appeal to bring in more interest, such as Belinda Jensen and Bobby Jensen.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he liked that idea of using Belinda and Bobby. He also suggested having a project or presentation aimed at children, to replace the coloring contest that has previously been held.

Board Member Bentz referenced a presentation that Fox 9 does at the Science Museum or the State Fair trivia that is done by NPR, and believed something of that nature could be a good idea.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he agreed with Board Member Lewis in regard to a broad appeal for the speaker, in an attempt to bring in additional interest for the first time at Happy Days.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that the Board is more interested in a local name that would bring in additional people for this first year, with a broad subject.

Board Member Bentz noted that many people book up quite far in advance and believed that someone should reach out as soon as possible in attempt to book the speaker.

Further discussion ensued regarding possible speakers, connections to possible speakers, and the length the presentation should be.

Board Member Lewis offered to reach out to Bobby Jensen to check his availability.

Board Member Enstrom advised that he could try contacting Ron Schara as a possible speaker.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that there are some funds available within the total budget for the event for a speaker.

Board Member Hiatt stated that additional funds could possibly be obtained through sponsorship.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that Board Members Enstrom and Lewis will follow up with him in regard to the speakers they are reaching out to. He advised of the times the Happy Days Committee meets and noted that once a speaker is booked, the Committee could be alerted and could include that name with the advertising for the event. He also asked that the Board think about exhibitors, as there will be available space. He noted that while he can reach out to past exhibitors, he would also like the Board Members to think of new opportunities.

Board Member Valentine asked if Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson could email the list of past exhibitors.

Chairperson Max stated that in the past the wood carvers group has been an exhibitor and believed the bigger venue would be great for that interactive event.

Board Member Enstrom suggested an exhibitor that could show/sell rocks and gemstones, as that type of vendor brings in a crowd.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that the Minnesota Geological Society has been invited in the past and does bring in a crowd.

Board Member Bentz suggested including a GPS course that has been setup near that area.

The Board further discussed possible exhibitors.

Board Member Lewis suggested creating a list of categories for exhibitors and then finding someone to match to ensure there is a wide variety of interests and educational aspects covered.

Board Member Enstrom suggested having an exhibit that would focus on rain gardens and identify different landscaping features within the City. He noted that the activity could be continued every year and awards could be given.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that the Board Members who volunteered will reach out to the possible speakers. He noted that he will accept any offers for assistance in regard to the planning for this event. He also confirmed that he would send out a list of those who had been invited as exhibitors in the past, and those that actually attended, within the next few days.

Chairperson Max confirmed that the Subcommittee should meet to discuss the event the following Monday at 7:00 p.m. at Caribou. He noted that the Subcommittee would develop the list of categories for exhibitors and continue planning efforts.

5.02: Tree Preservation Ordinance Review

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report. He provided comparison information from other communities and provided examples that he would like the Board to consider and offer input on.

Chairperson Max believed that one standard should be chosen and it should be made clear, rather than broader statements.

Board Member Enstrom commented that historical value should be considered, noting that some species have become rare or significant. He also discussed whether this would apply to existing homes.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson clarified that this Ordinance applies specifically to new development and is not and would not be applied retroactively to existing homes.

Board Member Bentz suggested removing desirable tree, unless it is specifically defined.

Board Member Valentine believed that the Ordinance should be applied to both individual and multi-family properties and to remove vagueness, to the extent possible. He did not believe that the Board should attempt to craft the exact language, but should instead provide some guidance and let staff choose the specific language.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that the Board believed the original intent of this Ordinance was to be applied across the board to individual and multi-family properties, the term desirable should be removed and significant should be used in its place, as well as replacement standards and/or restitution.

Chairperson Max questioned where Ramsey would like to fall on the spectrum and believed that the input of the Council would be beneficial, as to whether Ramsey should remain in the middle, above or below the curve.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the intent of this process is not to make development harder but to review what is there and possibly build in flexibility.

Board Member Bentz questioned the buildable area left and whether this is a huge issue.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that there are still sizable areas left to be developed within the City.

Board Member Lewis referenced vacant lots and whether that would need to be specified as well within the Ordinance, specifically towards tree removal and lot clearing.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he did not believe that the City has any direct ordinance regarding tree removal from a vacant lot but noted that the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO) requires a permit to be obtained for any lot disturbance over one acre, which may come into play in that scenario. He suggested that if the Board believes this be addressed that language be added to the intent of the Ordinance to clarify that point without stepping on the rights of property owners.

Board Member Enstrom provided additional information in regard to farming under Green Acres and the disadvantage that trees have on farming property.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he believed he had enough input from the Board at this time and would attempt to craft language to take out the vagueness of the Ordinance and intent statements.

5.03: Water Conservation Standards

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Lewis asked for additional information on permitting requirements regarding the installation of an irrigation system.

Board Member Bentz provided additional input on his irrigation system and the cost for certain monitoring equipment.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that the idea of offering an incentive for use of that monitoring equipment could be discussed with Public Works and the City Council.

Chairperson Max suggested that this item be thought about for the future.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

Chairperson Max referenced a public hearing that occurred regarding water pollution and asked for additional information regarding the scope of the Board, as he would think water pollution would come before this Board and not simply the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the storm water illicit discharge regulations will be in the Zoning Chapter of City Code and therefore the Planning Commission is responsible for holding the public hearing. The proposed amendments were the minimum required to remain in compliance with the MS4 permit and the LRRWMO's 3rd Generation Plan, so the decision was made to bring this directly to the Planning Commission rather than first to this Board, then the Planning Commission, then twice to the City Council. Additionally, there was some urgency in getting these amendments adopted, with the Planning Commission meeting being moved up one week, it occurred prior to the EPB meeting, which would have delayed the process by another month.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 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.