

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

On Monday, April 1, 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 Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent: Board Member Tara Prendergast
 Board Member Larry Lewis
 Board Member Thomas Stodola

Also Present: Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson
 City Councilmember John Letourneau

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Max called the meeting to order at 6:35 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 Member Valentine, Hiatt, and Bentz.
Voting No: None. Absent: Board Members Prendergast, Lewis, and Stodola.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated March 4, 2013

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Valentine to approve the regular meeting minutes dated March 4, 2013.

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

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Appointment of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Lewis to appoint Michael Max as Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board for the term of April 2013 through March 2014.

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

Motion by Board Member Bentz and seconded by Board Member Valentine to appoint Thomas Stodola as Vice Chairperson for the Environmental Policy Board for the term of April 2013 through March 2014.

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

5.02: Environmental Expo Discussion

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Hiatt asked if there were any suggestions for exhibitors that would be better suited to the fall setting compared to the spring setting the event has had in the past.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that some exhibits that have presented in the past may also wish to adjust their presentations for the fall setting.

Chairperson Max stated that perhaps Great River Energy (GRE) would like to participate.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that this is crunch time in order to obtain a big name speaker for the event, as they are now coming up on five months. He stated that big name may also help to track down other exhibitors.

The Board further discussed options for a guest speaker and the opportunity to possibly have two speakers.

Councilmember Letourneau stated that he could reach out to the speaker as a City Councilmember. He stated that in regard to the next case, perhaps it would be good to have a booth discussing the prairie establishment in the utility corridor.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that perhaps Prairie Restoration would be a suitable candidate for a second smaller scale presentation or speech.

Board Member Bentz stated that perhaps Prairie Restoration and/or GRE could bring some live plants that they will be using in the utility corridor to better show the native plantings that will be used.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he would like the focus to remain on obtaining a bigger name speaker and not splitting time between speakers.

Board Member Valentine stated that a nice PowerPoint presentation could be played on a loop and the exhibitor could also have native plant examples.

Board Member Hiatt questioned if QCTV could provide coverage of the presentation from the speaker so that the Board could get more coverage.

Councilmember Letourneau agreed that would be a great idea and would also provide leverage in obtaining the speaker, as the speaker would generate additional viewers and could also be provided with a copy of the recording for his own use.

Board Member Hiatt confirmed that Councilmember Letourneau will reach out to the possible speaker.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that it would be helpful to obtain guidance on the exhibitor direction that the Board would like to take and noted that a list of past exhibitors and suggestions for other exhibitors were included in the packet.

Board Member Valentine stated that he agreed with the theme mentioned by Chairperson Max earlier, the environment is your backyard and believed that exhibitors should have a link to that theme.

The Board discussed the possibility of the garden club participating.

Councilmember Letourneau noted that there is not only spring planting but also fall planting and the focus could be on that concept. He also questioned if one of the exhibitors was appropriate for the setting.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he has used a vendor like that which sold reusable containers or bags.

Board Member Bentz questioned if Connexus would be invited to the event as he believed that they had been an exhibitor in the past.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that Connexus was unable to attend the event the previous year because of a conflicting schedule but noted that he would hope they would participate this year once again. He asked for specifications to be narrowed down.

Chairperson Max stated that taking on water issues, whether that refers to well or city water, septic, and/or conservation.

Board Member Valentine stated that perhaps they should reach out to an exhibitor such as the DNR or MPCA to focus on water issues.

Board Member Hiatt suggested that an invitation be sent to past exhibitors explaining the theme and asking for their participation to see how many are interested. He stated that he would like preference given to local vendors.

Chairperson Max stated that the list should be narrowed down to an A list and B list. He recognized the preference for local exhibitors but noted that additional options could possibly be provided by a larger scale exhibitor.

The Board reviewed the list of past and possible exhibitors to provide input to staff.

Councilmember Letourneau stated that he felt that perhaps everyone should be invited and either a system should be developed for rating those responses, or it should be setup as a first come first serve basis.

Board Member Hiatt stated that perhaps the theme should be included in the invitation and exhibitors could be asked to respond as to how they would fit into the event.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he would certainly be willing to do whatever the Board would like, but he was just going on the input from the Board as to possibly changing the event. He stated that in the past there has not been exhibitors breaking down the door to join the event and may see the extra steps of responding as to how they would fit the event as a turn off. He noted that staff already has to issue follow up calls to solidify the exhibitors. He stated in all the years that the event has been in the City Hall location the exhibitors have been allowed smaller exhibit spaces. He explained that when it comes closer to the event date, the Board and exhibitors could determine the amount of space they need and whether some of those spaces should be shared or reduced. He confirmed that the Board would like to invite the exhibitors from the previous year as well as Connexus and the entities that were discussed at the previous Board meeting. He recognized that some exhibitors may be better suited for the craft fair or business fair portion of the event.

Councilmember Letourneau suggested including language that stressed urgency in response so that exhibitors do not wait until the last minute to respond.

Board Member Bentz questioned if the new Ordinance language could be displayed as well.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that information could be included at the Board's booth. He stated that in years past this planning has been done in the winter, when the planning work is lessened and advised that he would welcome any assistance from the Board as the planning will coincide with the busy building season. He confirmed that the event will be run from 11am to 7 pm and advised that a statement will be made to vendors that attendance will increase before and after the parade.

5.03: Prairie Establishment in Utility Corridor

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report. He provided an update on conversations he has had with the Parks Supervisor and noted that the Board would need to determine the species they would like to add to the raingarden, the number of plantings to be included and signage. He noted that perhaps the signage could tie into the signage that is already installed in the park and could explain the types of plantings and why there were chosen. He advised that additional signage could be placed further down which explains the prairie establishment in the utility corridor. He ask that Board Members begin to consider the number and type of plants they would like to use and he could then determine if grant funds would be available to assist in the process.

Board Member Hiatt questioned if the Agreement includes language regarding the cost and long-term maintenance.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that the cost will be covered by GRE and maintenance is included for the first three years but believed that this would ultimately be the responsibility of the City. He explained that once a prairie is established there is not much maintenance required.

Board Member Bentz questioned if anyone has been out taking pictures so the transformation of the utility corridor and raingarden could be documented.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson clarified that the focus should remain on the raingarden and the species and signage for that project. He stated that it should remain simple as this is supposed to be an example of what residents could construct and maintain on their own property. He stated that the example in the Board packet simply showed an example but noted that he would not recommend including more than six to eight species. He clarified that he would recommend larger signs, similar to those used in Sunfish Park that could help visitors identify species. He confirmed that the Board would still like to reach out to the Garden Club and the local Eagle Scouts to determine their interest in participating in the project. He advised that a blurb could be included in the City newsletter as well asking for volunteers that would like to assist at the park on specific dates. He confirmed that he could develop a plan and timeline for the project for the Board to review and provide input. He explained that the raingarden is a separate project from the GRE utility corridor plantings.

Board Member Bentz noted that Anoka Technical College has a landscaping class and stated that perhaps one of those students would like to participate in the project as they would have more experience than an Eagle Scout.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that prior to the next Board meeting he would attempt to develop a timeline and gather information for the project.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Recycling Event (May 4)**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that the spring recycling event will take place on May 4th from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and confirmed that the tree pickup will also occur in conjunction with this event. He reported that about 50 to 60 trees and shrubs have been sold so far and noted that some have been much more in demand than others. He believed that the discounted rate and the deadline for that discount helped to create urgency.

- **Arbor Day Planting (May 18)**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that an Arbor Day planting will take place at North Commons on May 18th from 9:00 a.m. to around 12:00 p.m. He reported that staff is attempting to regain the partnership with PACT Charter School for the event. He encouraged the Board to participate in the event and noted that he will also invite the Mayor to the event. He advised that an invitation may also be extended to the neighborhood, as some of them assisted in the plantings the previous year.

- **Focus on Environment Article**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented a draft article on Oak wilt. He stated that in reviewing the bank of articles he noticed that the supply is dwindling down for this time of year.

Board Member Bentz questioned if staff needs additional articles.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that perhaps he will add an item to the next agenda to discuss future article topics and QCTV spots.

- **Other**

Councilmember Letourneau noted that the Councilmembers can also include these events in their Council updates that they provide to QCTV. He stated that it was a pleasure to attend the meeting tonight and thanked all the Board Members for their input and service to the City. He hoped that the relationship between himself and the Board would be open and cooperative.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson provided information on the new Board Member, who was unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts tonight.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 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.