

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

On Monday, January 7 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 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 6:33 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated December 10, 2012

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

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

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Tree Sale Discussion (Continued)

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report and reviewed the proposed species of trees to be included in the tree sale this year. He stated that he is still working to develop an incentive for early orders. He noted that the January/February City newsletter was condensed but he was able to include a small paragraph announcing the tree sale and directing interested parties to the City website.

Chairperson Max questioned how many people pre-ordered in previous sales.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson was unsure of the number but did not think it was very high. He estimated a total of 12-15 orders but noted that many of the orders included multiple trees. He advised that sales have declined over the past three years.

Board Member Lewis questioned if another issue of the newsletter would reach residents prior to March 31st.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson confirmed that the March/April issue would reach residents prior to that date.

Board Member Lewis commented that Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson chose a nice selection of trees for the sale.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he hoped to finalize the species list in the next week with the vendor.

Board Member Bentz questioned if these species were native.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that while not all the species are native, they all perform well in this area.

Chairperson Max confirmed that the Subcommittee did not meet since the last meeting.

5.02: Tree Preservation Ordinance Review

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report and asked for the input of the Board on whether there is desire or need to revisit the ordinance in terms of replacement standards.

Board Member Bentz stated that he believed the ordinance to be wordy and easy to get lost in. He questioned if this would be discouraging for a developer coming into the City. He noted that while he did not see anything wrong with the ordinance, he believed it could be simplified.

Board Member Lewis questioned how this ordinance compares to those of other Metro communities.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that portions of the ordinance are average, portions are less restrictive, and other portions are more restrictive than other Metro communities.

Chairperson Max stated that there was a developer on the Board when this ordinance was developed and his thought was that he did not care what the ordinance said as long as it is applied equally for all developments.

Board Member Valentine questioned the purpose of revisiting the ordinance.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson explained that reviewing the tree preservation standards was on the approved Work Plan. The purpose of reviewing the ordinance is to determine if the Board is comfortable with it in its present format or if there is a desire to research and recommend tree replacement standards.

Board Member Valentine stated that he did not feel that the Board had the proper information in regard to setting the benchmark for replacement but felt that the Board could provide direction on whether Ramsey should stand at the front of the pack for this issue or whether the community should simply meet the average standards of other metro communities.

Chairperson Max stated that it would be helpful to have a Council liaison for this matter after the Council holds its annual goal setting session. He believed that this is a good time for the discussion because development has hit the bottom and should begin to pick up again.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he will gather information from similar ordinances from neighboring communities within Anoka County, and a few across the Metro area, to bring back to the Board.

Chairperson Max questioned how Ramsey compares to Plymouth.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that it has been a while since he reviewed the standards of Plymouth but believed that Plymouth is more stringent than Ramsey at this time and provided examples.

Board Member Bentz noted that some of the older and more established communities have the opportunity to be more stringent because their land is mostly used up and because their community is already desirable.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson explained that the purpose of the review is not to deem how the City can become more stringent, but to determine if the ordinance accomplishes its intended purpose.

Board Member Valentine agreed with Board Member Bentz that those thoughts should be kept in mind when reviewing the ordinances of other metro communities.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that there are two overlay districts, Wild and Scenic River District and the Critical River District, within Ramsey and provided some background on both related to vegetation management, noting that the State did

not require replacement standards in their regulations. He explained that the City can add additional requirements, including replacement standards, for the overlay districts.

Chairperson Max noted that might be an opportunity to partner with the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO) for a targeted campaign.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson provided additional information regarding Ash trees and the Emerald Ash Borer. He also advised of an upcoming conference on the topic that will be hosted in Hopkins and asked that any interested Board Members let him know if they would like to attend.

Board Member Bentz discussed the irrigation requirements and the possible exemption of rain gardens and drought resistant plants.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson agreed that the Board could work to develop recommendations for a list of exemptions that could be included in the irrigation portion of the ordinance to assist in water conservation. He stated that he would develop something that the Board could review at the next meeting. He noted that he would also review the ordinances of neighboring communities and across the metro to determine where the City falls on the scale and if there are any innovative measures the City could incorporate regarding tree preservation.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Expiring Terms**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised that Board Member Enstrom's term expires on March 31, 2013.

- **New Recycling Funding Opportunities**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson advised of new recycling funding opportunities, noting that the spring and fall recycling events could possibly be held on a smaller scale on a monthly basis with the City paying for advertising and a local vendor, such as Ace, running the events. He advised of opportunities for park recycling and noted that he was able to obtain County funds to purchase recycling carts for the parks.

- **Board Member Input**

Board Member Bentz questioned if staff has put any thought into obtaining talent for the Expo.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that was one of the items he had asked the Board to assist with.

Chairperson Max suggested that item be added to the next agenda to allow additional brainstorming.

Board Member Hiatt advised of a program he listened to on the way to the meeting regarding a possible push from the legislature on recycling.

Board Member Valentine stated that he would be interested to know if the monthly recycling opportunities will boost the participation of residents.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 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.