

### **5.03: Consider Draft Ordinance Amendment Addressing Irrigation Requirements (Discussion Purposes Only)**

#### **Presentation**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating over the past two months, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) has discussed a potential ordinance amendment regarding irrigation requirements for multi-family and commercial/industrial developments. The intention originally was simply to eliminate the City Code requirement that in-ground irrigation systems shall be installed in all multi-family and commercial/industrial projects. However, based on information received at their January meeting from a guest speaker, the EPB directed Staff to revise the DRAFT Ordinance so that it also stipulates that if an irrigation system is installed (including single family parcels), it shall be equipped with a rain sensor (per state statute) as well as one or more water efficient technologies. This could include, but would not be limited to, a smart controller, soil moisture sensor(s), and/or an evapotranspiration (ET) sensor(s). This provides enough flexibility so that as future advances in water efficient irrigation technologies are developed, it will not require additional ordinance amendments.

City Planner Anderson explained the cost of these ‘smart’, water efficient technologies has come down as they have become more commonplace. Again, based on input from a guest speaker from Conserva Irrigation, including a smart controller, for example, to a new irrigation system, only adds about \$250 to \$350 to the overall cost. It is more expensive to retrofit existing systems with the more water efficient technologies, approximately \$650 to \$750. However, the Return on Investment (ROI) for a standard residential system could be realized relatively quickly, maybe in as few as two to four years (and would be even quicker on larger, commercial systems).

City Planner Anderson reported as water supply continues to be a prominent concern for the City and as the ‘smart’ technologies become more commonplace (and therefore with prices coming down), the EPB believes that requiring water efficient technologies is appropriate. However, the EPB has also noted that they want to ensure that this is enforceable. Thus, staff is still assessing how the water efficient requirement could be verified in the field. At this time, it does not appear that it could be addressed through any existing inspection. Additional review is still needed on this aspect.

#### **Commission Business**

Chairperson Bauer supported the City being proactive on the City’s water usage and its proper management.

Commissioner Anderson agreed.

Commissioner VanScoy also supported the City addressing this issue and asked if the proposed plan went far enough. He questioned if something other than sod should be considered in order to reduce the City’s dependence on water.

City Planner Anderson stated this was an excellent point. He discussed a portion of City Code regarding the use of native plantings and how the City was working to address landscaping that required less chemicals and water. He indicated the EPB was hoping to get something in place prior to the 2017 construction season.

Chairperson Bauer thanked City Planner Anderson for the update on this item.