

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

On Monday, March 19, 2018, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Council Chambers at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Thomas Stodola  
                            Board Member Colleen Anderson  
                            Board Member Reid Bernard  
                            Board Member Michael Hiatt  
                            Board Member Lucas Trossen  
                            Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent:     Board Member Jane Covart

Also Present:         City Planner Chris Anderson

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Anderson, Hiatt, Bernard, Trossen, and Valentine. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated February 26, 2018**

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Trossen to approve the regular meeting minutes dated February 26, 2018.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Trossen, Anderson, Bernard, and Hiatt. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

**5.     POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

**5.01: Review Updated Draft Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of the case is to check in with the EPB on the draft Natural Resources Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that as staff continues to work on the chapter, they wanted to provide the Board another opportunity to review and provide input/feedback. He noted that this will be the last review by the Board prior to the third and final public open house on the overall Comprehensive Plan Update, which is scheduled for April 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. He stated that this will not be the last time the Board reviews this chapter in the overall process.

Board Member Hiatt asked if it would be appropriate to mandate gathering specific data on a regular basis, such as the natural resources inventory. He explained that the information is only helpful and relevant if the data is current.

City Planner Anderson stated that although he agrees that language could be added stating that the City needs to be cognizant that the document cannot be static and does need to be updated, he would be hesitant to specify specific intervals for updating. He used the example of the recession in which development stood still and there were no impacts to the natural areas for a long period of time.

Board Member Hiatt stated that perhaps a large window be specified, such as 10 years. He stated that if it is not mandated that the information needs to be updated, it is easier for the document to go by the wayside.

City Planner Anderson stated that if there is consensus among the Board, he would be happy to incorporate the language.

Board Member Valentine agreed with the language suggested by Board Member Hiatt. He stated that there is probably a way that the language could be drafted to provide flexibility. He noted that he also is a member of the Steering Committee and noted that group is impressed with this report.

Chairperson Stodola asked if the document reflects the tweaks or whether there are still amendments to be done.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that there have been amendments made to the document since the last review by the Steering Committee.

Chairperson Stodola asked for input on the proposed language and how that language could both include guidelines and flexibility.

City Planner Anderson stated that he can work with staff to develop appropriately worded language and summarized the consensus of the Board that the document should not be static and should be updated within a window of 10 years, but the window should also provide flexibility should the document need to be updated sooner or later than 10 years.

Chairperson Stodola stated that this is an impressive document and commended staff and the Steering Committee for their work thus far.

City Planner Anderson asked if there are any items that the Board feels have been left out of the planning cycle for the next 10 years.

Board Member Valentine noted the changing retail market and stated that will continue to be a changing market that will have a huge effect on commercial development because of the continuing trend for buyers to purchase goods online. He noted that although it is hard to predict what will happen in that market, that has been a part of the discussions in updating the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **5.02: Review Draft Mississippi River Critical Corridor Area Chapter of Comprehensive Plan**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of this case is to review a draft of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He advised that staff will continue to refine the chapter but wanted to provide the Board with an opportunity to review and comment prior to the public open house on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Chairperson Stodola asked if this section would fall under the same recommendation as the previous chapter, regarding the possibility of adding language to require updating documents.

City Planner Anderson commented that the natural resources inventory would include all parts of the City, including the corridor, and therefore he did not feel that the language would be necessary in this chapter. He stated that if it is the preference of the Board, the language could be added to this chapter.

Chairperson Stodola agreed that the language to be included in the last chapter would be sufficient to address all applicable areas.

Board Member Valentine stated that it could be helpful to have a brief statement to the same nature for this chapter.

Board Member Hiatt commented that it could be helpful to have updated information for specific items that would apply to this area, such as soil erosion. He noted that there may be possibilities for adding funding partners for this area because of the shared resource. He explained that if the City can stress that they would like to have updated data, to the extent possible, it could help to possibly gain assistance from the other partners that have an interest in this corridor.

City Planner Anderson agreed that perhaps that would open a door for potential grant funds to accomplish that data collection work in this specific corridor and perhaps adding that statement to this section would make more sense than he originally thought.

Board Member Anderson referenced the statement regarding a positive learning environment and asked if there are methods that will be used to attempt to communicate this information and get people interested.

City Planner Anderson replied that through the Resilient Communities Partnership, staff is working with an adult education course on organics recycling. He stated that group is helping to develop an outline on how best to communicate and educate the community on that topic. He

explained that the City could possibly use that framework with any topic of interest to communicate and educate. He stated that the information regarding the corridor is not only important for the homeowners along the river, but throughout the community and beyond.

### **5.03: Review Landscape and Tree Preservation Plans for Basalt Industrial (Project No. 18-105)**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of the case is to review the Landscape and Tree Preservation Plans associated with a Site Plan for a new industrial building project. He noted that the project is located at the northeast corner of Basalt Street and 141<sup>st</sup> Avenue NW and is currently owned by the City. He noted that there is an active purchase agreement in place with the developer, Sharp and Associates. He provided additional details on the Landscape and Tree Preservations plans for this Site Plan.

Chairperson Stodola stated that this seems pretty straightforward and confirmed the consensus of the Board that there is nothing that needs to be added.

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to recommend approval of the Landscape and Tree Preservation Plans contingent upon compliance with the Staff Review Letter.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Stodola, Board Member Valentine, Hiatt, Anderson, Bernard, and Trossen. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

## **6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT**

- **Volunteer Opportunity**

City Planner Anderson asked for members of the Board and community at large that would be interested in volunteering. He explained that one of the student groups involved in the Resilient Communities Project program is working on conducting a public tree survey and needs assistance from the residents. He noted that there would be two training sessions, one night in a classroom session and a one day field session to learn how to collect data accurately. He stated that the survey will be immensely helpful to better prepare the City for the future in dealing with whatever comes along (Emerald Ash Borer, etc.). He stated that this is a great opportunity for people that like to be outside and would like to participate or give back to the community. He stated he welcomes phone calls or emails from those in the community that would be interested in participating.

Board Member Anderson asked if the dates for the training and data collection are known.

City Planner Anderson replied that the original dates for training were slated for April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> but noted that the student group determined that it would perhaps make sense to determine the number of volunteers that will be available and then work to find a date that would work best for those involved. He believed that the training would occur before the end of April. He stated that the survey work would continue throughout the summer during leaf-on conditions, in shorter segments of a few hours per session, with two or three people per team, which helps to alleviate questions and safety concerns. He noted that the data will then be compiled at the University of Minnesota. He stated that the training will help to provide volunteers with a good base of

information to use. He noted that with any survey that is done, there is a margin of error built in to allow for mistakes that may occur but advised that the study results should be at least 85 percent accurate and will provide the City will a lot of knowledge.

- **Farewell to Board Member Trossen**

City Planner Anderson reported that this is Board Member Trossen's last meeting with the EPB. He thanked him for his service to the Board over the past four years.

The members of the Board echoed their thanks to Board Member Trossen.

Board Member Trossen stated that he plans to finish his masters degree.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
City Planner

ATTEST:

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JoAnn Shaw  
Community Development Secretary

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