

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

On Monday, June 18, 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 Michael Valentine
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Michael Madison
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Jane Covart

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Planning Intern Peggy Sue Imihy
 Acting Mayor John LeTourneau

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Bernard, Fetterley, Madison, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated May 21, 2018

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to approve the regular meeting minutes dated May 21, 2018.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Bernard, Fetterley, Hiatt, Madison, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Variance Request to Place a Detached Accessory Building within the Required Setback from the Ordinary High Water Mark of the Rum River at 15795 Juniper Ridge Drive NW (Project No. 18-123); Case of Rick and Diane Farrell

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He explained that the City has received an application from Rick and Diane Farrell for a variance to construct a detached accessory building within the required setback from the Rum River on the property located at 15795 Juniper Ridge Drive NW. He recommended approval of the requested variance conditioned upon the applicant moving the location of the shed so that it is in line with the front wall of the home on the subject property. He noted that while this may be more visible from the road, it certainly increases the setback from the OHW closer to about 120 feet. He noted that this also appears to essentially eliminate the need for removing any existing trees and ensures that the shed is not within the Scenic Easement.

Board Member Moore stated that it appears to be something already in the location proposed by staff.

City Planning Intern Imihy replied that each variance must be considered on its own merit and therefore even though the neighbor has a building in that location, this request must be considered separately. She stated that in the proposed location on this property would simply be some landscaping materials.

Board Member Fetterley asked the number of trees that would be removed.

City Planning Intern Imihy replied that the proposed structure is a one car garage. She stated that a tree inventory has not yet been done to determine the number of trees that would be removed, or the number of those that are dead.

Acting Mayor LeTourneau asked if the applicant would be required to comply with the tree preservation ordinance.

City Planner Anderson stated that if the tree preservation standards are applied to the lot, the applicant would not exceed the removal thresholds that would require replanting. He stated that if there is a deviation from code, a reasonable condition could be to require additional native plantings.

Board Member Hiatt asked if there has been any feedback from the neighbors.

City Planning Intern Imihy stated that there will be a public hearing as part of the variance review, which will occur at the Planning Commission meeting.

City Planner Anderson stated that notification has not yet been sent to those within 350 feet of the project boundary for the July 12th Planning Commission. He stated that comments have not yet been received because the issue has not yet been noticed.

Acting Mayor LeTourneau asked for input on the purpose of the EPB reviewing this. He stated that in his opinion the Planning Commission would have more input on the variance while the

focus of the EPB would be on the potential impact to the Scenic Overlay District, tree removal, and bank stabilization.

Board Member Hiatt commented that it appears that the property owner is more concerned with visibility from the road while the policy addresses the view from the river. He believed that the Board should support protection of the scenic view from the river and therefore would support the first or second alternatives proposed in the staff report.

Chairperson Valentine agreed and noted that it appears that the Board would like to help preserve/restore the property landscaping in an attempt to prevent erosion.

City Planner Anderson stated that moving the structure forward on the property would provide additional space for infiltration before stormwater enters the river. He stated that the concern is with the existing natural vegetation which plays a role in maintaining the bank integrity. He noted that there will be soil disturbance and removal of plants. He stated that there are other open space areas on the property that would not require removal of vegetation and that would provide sufficient space for infiltration. He stated that this would add impervious surface and therefore there is an opportunity to provide a condition that a number of plantings accompany the request. He stated that the use of gutters and rain barrels would also help to prevent erosion. He believed that moving the structure forward would minimize disturbance.

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to recommend approval of the requested variance conditioned upon the applicant moving the location of the shed so that it is no closer to the OHW than the rear wall of the home on the subject property.

Further discussion: Acting Mayor LeTourneau stated that in his observation the homeowner appears to have a high level of concern of their property and has done a good job maintaining the natural state. He stated that the homeowner has also asked for the opinion of the City in this matter, which he appreciates. He noted that this recommendation supports the least amount of environmental impact and protection of the scenic viewshed of the river. City Planner Anderson clarified the motion that was made via alternative two in the staff report. Board Member Hiatt stated that his intention was to support alternative one.

Board Member Hiatt rescinded the motion, seconded by Board Member Fetterley.

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to recommend approval of the requested variance conditioned upon the applicant moving the location of the shed so that it is in line with the front wall of the home on the subject property.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Fetterley, Bernard, Madison, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

5.02: Update on Cooperative Weed Management Partnership

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that City staff has been attending meetings coordinated by the Anoka County Conservation District (ACD) regarding a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Partnership to address invasive and noxious weeds within the county. He stated that there are several points of emphasis for this partnership including mapping

locations of noxious weeds, better coordination of public education efforts, and potential access to grant funds by private property owners for noxious weed control. He stated that participation in the CWMA does require execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is a non-binding agreement that outlines the five main goals: information exchange, education, prevention, noxious weed control, and cooperation. He recommended that the Board recommend that the City Council authorize execution of the MOU for Ramsey to officially join the Anoka County Weed Management Area Partnership. The MOU does not obligate the City to do anything and provides Ramsey residents with potential access to grant funds to address noxious weeds on private land. The ACD would act as the grant administrator, thus this does not add any additional responsibility on City staff. He noted that the spirit of the partnership is to encourage information sharing, public education, and enhanced control of noxious weeds, which can have detrimental health impacts.

Chairperson Valentine asked for an update on the additional resources that this may require of staff.

City Planner Anderson replied that perhaps .25 FTE but noted that he already acts in this role and therefore this will not be additional work as he already completes this work. He stated that the additional activity would be for him to forward the information to the Conservation District, who would then visit the site, map the information, and conduct treatment.

Chairperson Valentine commented that this is a terrific program and just wanted to make sure that this would not be additional work for staff.

Acting Mayor LeTourneau asked for additional information comparing the current process today and the process that would occur under the MOU.

City Planner Anderson explained that this would open the door for the potential access to grant funds. He noted that the total grant is \$20,000 and therefore will not solve all the issues. He stated that property owners would have an opportunity to apply in a competitive atmosphere to address noxious weed on their property. He stated that otherwise the process would not be different. He explained that the grant would be for a cost-share where the homeowner would pay for the removal and then could potentially be reimbursed for a portion of the cost. He stated that this would also bring in cooperation and information sharing between the communities, as plants do not know municipal boundaries.

Motion by Chairperson Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to recommend that City Council authorize execution of the MOU to participate in the Anoka County Cooperative Weed Management Area Partnership.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Bernard, Fetterley, Madison, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

Chairperson Valentine welcomed the newest member of the EPB and asked the new member to introduce himself.

Board Member Madison introduced himself and stated that he is excited to be a part of the Board and to be involved in the community.

City Planner Anderson stated that he met with ACE Solid Waste today to talk about recycling. He stated that there are some changes occurring that have impacts on recycling and provided an update. He stated that he will continue to follow the issue and provide updates to the Board.

Board Member Hiatt noted that he and Board Member Moore attended the tree survey training and complimented staff for a well-organized event. He stated that it was a fun experience and he looks forward to being a part of the survey.

City Planner Anderson stated that there will be two more training events, in the middle of July and again in August, for those residents that would still like to participate.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.