

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

On Monday, October 15, 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 Jane Covart
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Michael Madison

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 Acting Mayor LeTourneau, City Council Liaison

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 20, 2018

Motion by Board Member Fetterley and seconded by Board Member Covart to approve the regular meeting minutes dated August 20, 2018.

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

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Review Updated Alternative Urbanwide Area Review (AUAR) for The COR (Project No. 18-112)

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that in 2003, the City Council adopted Resolution #03-01-012 ordering an Alternative Urbanwide Area Review (AUAR) for The COR (formerly known as Ramsey Town Center). An AUAR is an environmental review process that can be used in lieu of more traditional environmental reviews such as Environmental Assessment Worksheets (EAW) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), as long as the geographic area is covered by an acceptable Comprehensive Plan. When considering The COR as a whole, it is likely that a series of individual projects in short sequence could trigger the need for an EAW. For example, the recent project known as Affinity at Ramsey likely would have triggered the need for an EAW based on the number of projects approved in the past number of years.

City Planner Anderson reported that WSB has completed a draft update of The COR AUAR. There have been no new findings of threatened or endangered species (based on the Natural Heritage Information System). There have been no significant deviations or changes to the overall vision or development plan for The COR since the last update. The document has been updated with all development within The COR since the last update and the Mitigation Plan has also been updated as well.

City Planner Anderson stated that ultimately, Staff will be bringing forward this planning document for City Council authorization to distribute the updated AUAR to the requisite agencies. The updated AUAR also needs to be submitted to the Environmental Quality Board (state agency) for a ten (10) day comment period. Upon completion of the comment period, the City will need to develop responses to any comments received and add them as an appendix to the document. It then must go back to City Council for final adoption.

Chairperson Valentine expressed appreciation to staff for the thorough description, as this is a complicated process.

Acting Mayor LeTourneau agreed that this is a complicated process. He asked if there was any discussion to expand the boundary of the AUAR to include the Bunker Lake industrial park.

City Planner Anderson explained that could be considered but noted that if the boundaries are changed, that may trigger the need to start a new AUAR rather than simply completing an update. He noted that the Bunker Lake industrial park did not trigger the need for an AUAR and therefore it was not contemplated to expand the boundaries.

Board Member Covart referenced the example of Little Duke's and their underground storage and asked what the City would do to help the company implement the sensors mentioned.

City Planner Anderson replied that would be a discussion. He stated that may have already occurred and simply was not recorded in the inspection process. He noted that the tank storage is double walled and explained that the sensor would simply be another element of safety that could alert to a leak. He stated that staff is looking through documentation to determine if the

sensor was installed and if not, staff would then talk to the business owner to determine how that sensor could be retrofit.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to recommend that the City Council authorize staff to distribute The COR AUAR update for comments.

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

5.02: Consider 2019 Municipal Recycling Funding Request

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that each year, Anoka County receives funding from the State of Minnesota pursuant to Minnesota Statute 115A.557. The County distributes these funds, known as SCORE (Select Committee On Recycling and the Environment) funds, to municipalities within the county. In 2019, the allocation includes a base of \$10,000 plus \$5.00 per household, which would place Ramsey with a base allocation of \$55,390 for 2019. He explained that the funding is intended to help municipalities achieve their recycling goals as established by the Anoka County Board of Commissioners. Ramsey's 2019 recycling goal, established by Anoka County, is 2,777 tons (which is an increase of 81 tons from 2018). The goal is based on 215 pounds per person. The City of Ramsey has traditionally used these funds to promote recycling and waste reduction education and awareness, notifying new residents of the recycling program components, to offset costs of the spring and fall recycling day events and other collection events/opportunities, and to fund the recycling coordinator position, whose duties are a component of the City Planner position.

City Planner Anderson provided background information on the recent changes in the recycling market.

City Planner Anderson stated that in addition to the base allocation, there are four broad funding categories where additional funds can be requested: drop-off, general enhancement, organics, and an open-grant option for general program expansion. Staff is proposing to request an additional \$2,700 for the Summer Recycling Event (drop-off), \$12,800 for general enhancement (covers parks recycling, event promotion, etc.), and \$1,600 for the organics program. While there is the potential for up to \$20,000 for the open-grant option, it is clearly not intended to be long-term funding and therefore staff has not included that in the current request.

Chairperson Valentine stated that the future of plastics recycling is in doubt and asked if that may bring back interest in incineration rather than landfills.

City Planner Anderson stated that the GRE facility in Elk River is closing sometime in 2019, as it was losing funds in the operation. He was unsure that incineration would be a long-term option. He stated clarified that he does not think plastics recycling is going away, but simply needs to be refocused with better education on what is recyclable. He stated that there are markets for the plastics if the contaminates can be taken out on the user end.

Board Member Fetterley asked if increased education of the public will allow the City to continue to meet the recycling tonnage goals or whether residents would be less likely to recycle in fear for doing it wrong.

City Planner Anderson replied that Ramsey residents do a great job recycling. He stated that in speaking with ACE Solid Waste, the large amount of contaminants are not coming from the Ramsey routes. He acknowledged that it is a fine line as you do not want to discourage people from recycling but simply emphasize recycling the correct materials rather than “wish-cycling”. He explained that the mindset for years has been that if you think something can be recycled, put in the recycling whereas the new motto is “when in doubt, throw it out”.

Acting Mayor LeTourneau stated that it is clear that recycling is becoming more complicated because of the changing markets, which is changing the way people look at recycling. He believed that it is important for the EPB to make a statement on recycling.

Chairperson Valentine agreed that it is important to be clear on the stance of the EPB to continue to support recycling and seek additional funding in order to continue to be successful. He stated that this is a key juncture in the recycling world.

Commissioner Fetterley agreed that it is important to continue to focus on this topic. She thanked staff for bringing this request forward for the City to request additional funds to continue the recycling efforts effectively.

City Planner Anderson stated that recycling is still extremely important and beneficial, there are just changes occurring right now. He stated that there are benefits to having a successful recycling program, which Ramsey has had for many years. He stated that it will become more challenging in the future to meet the increasing goals in the changing market. He noted that a portion of the additional funds being requested will be to facilitate the summer recycling event, which continues to increase in participation. He stated that there will just be an emphasis on providing clear educational messaging to the participants in the program on what is recyclable.

Jade Moore, 8277 155th Lane, referenced a statement made by City Planner Anderson regarding a barrier of language and asked for additional clarification.

City Planner Anderson replied that the barrier is that English is the second language of some residents of multi-family apartments and therefore the educational material may be more difficult to understand. He stated that the use of pictures is being contemplated to make it easier to understand. He stated that the City does have access to documents in different languages through Anoka County. He stated that Ramsey does not have the same ratio of multi-family apartment housing that other communities in Anoka County may have. He stated that he is not aware of the language barrier being a large problem in Ramsey but is aware that the documents are available because of the need in other communities.

Motion by Chairperson Valentine and seconded by Board Member Covart to recommend that the City Council authorize staff to submit the 2019 Recycling Funding Request to Anoka County.

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

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Fall Recycling Day Recap**

City Planner Anderson provided an update on the fall recycling event, which was held on September 29th. He stated that it was another successful recycling event and noted that in 2019 it is planned to have spring, summer and fall recycling events, pending the approval of funding from Anoka County.

- **Reminder of Connexus Energy's Invitation for their Solar Array Project (Presentation and Tour)**

City Planner Anderson reported that Connexus Energy is planning to have a celebration for their solar array project on Thursday, October 25th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. He noted that the event will begin with a presentation at the Connexus Energy office in Ramsey and will then transition to a tour of the solar array project site in Ramsey. He stated that RSVPs are desired and asked any interested Board Members to advise staff if they would like to attend.

Board Member Covart asked if the event is open to the general public or just the Board Members.

City Planner Anderson stated that the City received a specific invitation for the City Council, Boards and Commissions and therefore did not believe the event was open to the general public.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.